

From: (b)(6)(b)(6)
To: [Swenson, Peter](#)
Subject: Re: Your email message regarding the Back Forty Project
Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2017 2:24:46 PM

I can't believe the uproar over the Keystone pipeline while this pending disaster flies under the radar. The Menominee river flows into Lake Michigan, the primary source for drinking water for major cities and states that border it. When there is a spill or leaching of toxic chemicals into the water I am sure Aquila will apologize, pay the fine, and start mining again 24/7. However, think, and remember Flint, Michigan, and remember that this will also contaminate ground water and wells the source of the local drinking water. I sense that a great many law suits are waiting out there especially as health problems begin to occur. I would hate to have my name attached to this. Then, of course, there is the damage to wet lands caused by creating a 1,200 foot deep pit while drilling tunnels under the river and into Wisconsin. Just think about that for a moment. I guess they could use them for a land fill when they are finished mining. However, that won't work because of the pollution that the garbage would cause! Who is going to benefit from this "project", and how? I don't see an upside besides providing a dozen part time jobs for locals. Sad.

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From: "Swenson, Peter" <swenson.peter@epa.gov>
To:
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2017 1:44 PM
Subject: Your email message regarding the Back Forty Project

Thank you for your recent email message expressing concerns about the proposed Aquila Resources Inc. Back Forty Project in Menominee County, Michigan.

As currently proposed, the Back Forty Project requires a number of permits, including permits required by federal statute. The State of Michigan has the authority and responsibility to review permit applications and issue these permits. In its oversight role, EPA reviews the State's permits to ensure their consistency with federal statutes. EPA has engaged with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) on each of the following permits required by federal law:

Clean Air Act Permit: During the public comment period, EPA stated its concerns with some of the draft air construction permit conditions. As part of its permitting process, MDEQ provided a response to comments document addressing EPA's comments and all comments received during the public comment period at time of final air construction permit issuance. MDEQ revised certain permit conditions to address EPA's concerns.

Clean Water Act Section 402 Permit (wastewater discharge permit): EPA provided comments on the draft permit during the public comment period. MDEQ provided a revised permit and the

State's responses to comments. EPA provided additional comments to MDEQ on the revised permit. EPA's comments were focused primarily on toxicity testing and ambient monitoring requirements. EPA's comments were accepted by MDEQ and incorporated into the permit before it was issued on April 5, 2017. Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (wetlands permit): In August 2016, EPA objected to MDEQ issuing a 'Wetlands and Inland Lakes and Streams Permit.' Aquila Resources Inc. subsequently withdrew its MDEQ permit application. In January 2017, Aquila Resources Inc. re-applied to MDEQ. After MDEQ completes review of the application for completeness, MDEQ will issue a public notice, at which time, the public, tribes, and EPA will have an opportunity to provide comments. EPA will provide a thorough review of the revised permit application at that time.

Michigan also maintains state authority to issue mining permits under Part 632 of its Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. EPA does not have authority to oversee the State's Part 632 permits. If you have formal comments you wish to make, we recommend you submit them to the MDEQ within the relevant comment periods. EPA is committed to ensuring that permits issued by MDEQ for the Back Forty Project comply with applicable federal environmental protection laws.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

Peter Swenson
Chief, Watersheds and Wetlands Branch
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5